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Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

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Heavy Snow Limits Parking, Roads in Sequoia and Kings Canyon This Weekend

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are expected to remain open this weekend, but conditions are changing frequently. Heavy snow, along with related rockslides and falling trees, are limiting access to some roads and facilities. All vehicles are required to carry chains if they plan to visit the sequoia groves and snowplay areas. Visitors are urged to call ahead for the latest road conditions before they come: 559-565-3341, then press 4, then 1.

Almost 7 feet of fresh snow has fallen over the past week in many areas of the parks. Power has been out in the Grant Grove area of Kings Canyon National Park since Monday, forcing closure of the visitor center there. It will open as soon as power is restored, possibly by Saturday.

Snowplay areas in Grant Grove are open at Big Stump and Azalea, but snow is limiting parking and covering picnic tables. Azalea Campground is closed. The road to Wolverton Snowplay Area in Sequoia National Park is currently impassable. Park staff hope to have it open by Saturday afternoon, but it depends on how conditions change. Chains or four-wheel-drive are required in these areas.

At Grant Grove, rangers plan to offer free snowshoe walks at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday and 10:00 a.m. on Sunday. Reservations are usually required, but telephones in the area have been down. Interested visitors should come to the Kings Canyon Visitor Center at the time of the walk. Snowshoes will be distributed first-come, first-served. If the number of visitors exceeds the number of snowshoes the park has available, visitors can rent snowshoes at the concessioner in Grant Grove Village.

In the Lodgepole area of Sequoia National Park, rangers will offer evening programs as usual at Wuksachi Lodge on Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. All visitors are welcome to these free activities. They also plan to lead a snowshoe walk at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. Participants should call ahead for reservations: 559-565-4436.

The Generals Highway is closed between Wuksachi Lodge in Sequoia and Grant Grove in Kings Canyon National Park, and is not likely to open this weekend. One stretch of the Generals Highway south of the Giant Forest is limited to one lane of traffic due to road reconstruction. During the weekend, either flaggers or timed traffic lights will move traffic through one lane at a time.

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